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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 15, 2009

Maryland Examines Potential of Offshore Wind; Issues Request for Expression of Interest for Energy Generation Partners

ANNAPOLIS, MD: The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) announced today a new initiative to explore the potential for developing wind energy resources off of Maryland's coast. The US Energy Department estimates that Maryland has "outstanding" wind resources, rivaling or exceeding that of Midwestern land based wind resources. To evaluate the potential of these resources for commercial development, MEA's offshore wind initiative will include outreach to potential offshore wind developers, a technical evaluation of the wind resources off of Maryland's Atlantic coast and Outer Continental Shelf, and strong engagement with the local community.

"Offshore wind energy offers vast potential to create jobs for our workers and to help stabilize electric costs for our families while also increasing grid stability," remarked Governor Martin O'Malley. "As we continue our commitment to promote a *Smart, Green and Growing* Maryland, the benefits of the clean energy generated from offshore wind may prove to be vital for our State's energy and environmental future."

As part of this effort, MEA is releasing today a Request for Expression of Information and Interest to engage business and industry leaders with expertise in the installation and development of offshore wind energy. This request reaches out to U.S. and European developers to begin a constructive dialogue on strategies for facilitating a long-term offshore wind energy strategy for Maryland.

Simultaneously, the MEA is launching a study to evaluate opportunities for offshore wind energy on Maryland's Atlantic coast and Outer Continental Shelf. This study will assess the viability of offshore wind energy generation and build on important marine spatial planning work being currently developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy. Marine Spatial Planning has been employed to guide uses of our State's ocean ecosystem in ways that reduce potential environmental impacts. The results of this study will be available in early 2010 and will give the state, its citizens, and potential wind energy development partners significant guidance on the physical characteristics of Maryland's offshore resources.

"Offshore wind has the potential to supply more renewable energy than any other resource in the region," noted MEA Director Malcolm Woolf. "If Maryland is able to successfully harness these resources in a cost-effective way, the State will be able to satisfy its Renewable Portfolio Standard of 20 percent by 2022 and benefit from the growing Renewable Energy Credit market."

MEA is also working with local leaders to reach out to the community to obtain early feedback on the potential for an offshore wind energy project off of Maryland's coast. Maryland seeks to develop an inclusive approach that considers multiple possible deployment strategies such as an initial technical evaluation staging ground as

well as the potential for advanced large-capacity turbines and new methods of deep-water development. The State plans to draw on a broad range of capabilities and skills to also evaluate opportunities for manufacturing and supply chain development, transmission management and continued stakeholder outreach.

MEA's Request for Expression of Information and Interest can be found online at:

<http://energy.maryland.gov/documents/OffShoreREoI011210.pdf> ###